Antitoxin Laboratories

1914

See also correspondence in
"Fitzgerald, Dr John Gerald" file -

The Antitoxin Laboratories later became
the Connaught Medical Research Laboratories.

See also Osler, Sir Edmund

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University of Toronto

DEPARTMENT OF HYGIENE

TORONTO, CANADA

Camp Niagara:
Niagara-on-the-lake.
27 May 1915.

The Antitoxin Laboratory of the University of Toronto has been and is principally in being able to co-operate with the Militia Department, and with the Canadian Red Cross Society in the work done along the lines of Preventive Medicine and Hygiene; in the present war. The very serious menace of Tetanus was early in the war recognized and steps were taken by all the Combatants to safeguard in every way the wounded men exposed to infection with the tetanus bacil of Belgium.

However the demand for antitoxin was so great and so unexpected that the available supply was soon exhausted and that existing laboratories were so quickly overwhelmed with orders. About this time the Canadian Red Cross Society, having been appealed to

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were preparing to order five thousand packages of Tetanus antitoxin to be sent Overseas at once. They found that practically all of the laboratories preparing Tetanus Antitoxin had their supply with one or two exceptions spoken for until the end of the war. However this time the Antitoxin Laboratory was able to obtain Tetanus antitoxin and was further able to supply the order of the Canadian Red Cross Society for five thousand packages at such a low price that a saving of three thousand dollars on the order was effected.

This was brought to the notice of the Dominion Government and a grant of five thousand dollars was made to the Antitoxin Laboratory of the University of Toronto for the purpose of equipping a plant to prepare Tetanus Antitoxin for the

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use of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces. This Tetanus antitoxin to be sold to the Government at practically cost price. Work has been started some time since and thanks to the generosity of Major D. King Smith, the Ontario Veterinary College premises on St. have been loaned to the University, free of charge, for the purpose of stabling the horses at present being treated to produce Tetanus antitoxin. It is hoped that by early fall all the Tetanus antitoxin required for the use of Canadian troops will be produced in a Canadian laboratory and that this work of the University of Toronto will be the means of saving many lives, and will also mean a great saving in money to the Dominian Government.

The [illegible] Tetanus laboratory provides employment for several Canadians who were out of work through no fault of

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their own and it is expected that this employment will continue until the end of the war. This is a practical illustration of what is possible when "Made-in-Canada" is furthered in every possible way.

The Antitoxin Laboratory was also able through co-operation with the Health Department of New York to supply a very large part of the meningitis serum which was used with such conspicuous success in the meningitis outbreak at Exhibition Camp Toronto during the past winter.

J. G. FitzGerald

Director Antitoxin Laboratory.